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Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Guidance



Background

Equality Impact Assessments are a way to make sure the service you're setting up or providing is not inadvertently discriminating particular groups and encourages you to think carefully about the likely impact of your work on the patients and public you serve.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) provides a framework on which the Equality Impact Assessment is based on to protect individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all, protecting individuals from unfair treatment and promoting a fair and more equal society.

The Equality Impact Assessment focuses on systematically assessing and recording the likely equality impact of your service. The key purposes are to:

- Consider if the service relates to a policy or activity where there is significant potential for reducing health inequalities or improving outcomes for under-represented groups
- Identify whether certain groups are excluded from your services
- Identify any direct or indirect discrimination
- Assess if there is any adverse (negative) impact on particular groups
- Address identified equality issues in your services
- Where possible remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking the steps to meet the needs of people from protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people

The focus of the Equality Impact Assessments will be to assess the impact of your service on people with the 'protected characteristics' listed in the [Equality Act 2010](#), namely

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition to these, we will also consider the impact on

- Carers
- Welsh Language
- Rurality impacts
- Different socio-economic groups

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

An Equality Impact Assessment is an assessment to improve your service by making sure it does not discriminate and where possible promotes equality. It focuses on systematically assessing and recording the likely impact of an activity or service on people with 'protected characteristics'. This involves anticipating the consequences of activities on these groups and making sure that as far as possible any negative consequences are eliminated or minimised and opportunities for promoting equality are maximised.

The EqIA is carried out by drawing on available information to identify best practice with regards to equality relating to the service. This may include existing research, journal articles, direct feedback from patients and local community members and internal/external data monitoring information. Once this has been completed the findings of the EqIA should inform the development or review of the service, including action plans which will change the delivery of a product, activity or service, with clear monitoring arrangements.

Who is responsible for undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment?

As the service manager or lead you are responsible for ensuring an EqIA has been considered and undertaken as necessary. This can be delegated to an appropriate person in the team.

How to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out when developing or reviewing:

- New services
- Existing services

An EqIA should not be a separate exercise, it should be built in as an integral part of continuous service and performance review.

Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment for a new product, service or policy

Using the Equality Impact Assessment reporting template (Appendix 1), the steps below should be followed:

Step 1

INITIAL SCREENING

Use **Part 1 of the EqIA reporting template**

At the initial concept design stage for a new service or review of an existing service, consideration should be given to equality, diversity and inclusion principles and whether there are likely to be any issues that need to be considered at this early stage.

Consider the following questions to assess if you need to complete an EqIA:

- Does the service relate to a policy or activity where there is significant potential for reducing health inequalities or improving outcomes for under-represented groups?
- Does the service affect one or more of the protected characteristics or other vulnerable groups?
- Identify whether certain groups are excluded or negatively impacted from the service?
- What is the likely size of the group affected and how significant is the affect on them?
- Identify whether there is any direct or indirect discrimination
- Assess if there is any negative impact on particular groups
- Address identified equality issues in the service
- Where possible remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- Are you taking the steps to meet the needs of people from protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people

Product and services development

Throughout the development of a new service or a review of an existing service, there should always be due consideration of equality which should be considered iteratively through having diverse stakeholders, service users, patient representatives and community members. If you are struggling to ensure the group is diverse please reach out to the RPS who will be able to support.

Step 2

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Whilst the service is being developed you should initially undertake an internal Equality Impact Assessment review completing **Part 2 of the Equality Impact Assessment Reporting Review**. This review should draw upon existing relevant information such as published research, direct feedback from stakeholders and internal/external data monitoring information.

During this review you should hold an Equality Impact Assessment workshop to engage with representatives of protected characteristics, vulnerable groups and the groups who the service is designed for to get their views and experience.

Each protected characteristic should be considered in turn and impacts identified by the group alongside action plans to address these (or a rationale for not addressing them) will be recorded on **Part 3 of the EqIA Reporting Template**.

Once this has been completed the findings of the EqIA workshop should inform the development or review of the assessed product, policy or service, including action plans drawn up to inform the development of and any decisions to change the delivery of a product or service, concluding with clear monitoring arrangements.

Positive Action

Some activities are targeted at particular individuals or groups with protected characteristics, and these by definition will have a differential impact. The assessment of this impact must consider whether it is justifiable. Differential impact can be justified as part of a wider strategy of positive action in relation to particular groups, where the initiative is intended to encourage equality of opportunity for a particular group. Where this is the case it is necessary to justify actions and provide a clear rationale for them.

Step 3

ACTION PLANNING AND ONGOING MONITORING

An action plan and ongoing monitoring is completed in **Part 3 of the EqIA Reporting Template**.

The EQIA report should clearly express:

- What research was undertaken during the assessment
- What was discovered,
- How evidence and engaging with stakeholders and service users has informed an action plan to improve equality within the service.

The report should establish which groups experience each type of impact or combination and draw conclusions as to possible explanations.

The report should properly evidence and recommend one of three implementation options:

- No barriers or impact identified; proceed with no change
- Adapt or change the service in a way which will eliminate or reduce impact to affected groups
- Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the product or service (e.g., in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore, you are going to proceed knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.

The action plan and ongoing monitoring should include:

- Actions identified as necessary
- Details of who is responsible for implementation of actions
- Timescale for implementation
- Timescale and actions for review
- Details of the monitoring arrangements reviewed on an annual basis

Appendix 1: RPS Equality Impact Assessment Reporting Template

Part 1 Initial screening of the proposed service

1. The purpose and aims of the service

Provide a brief description of the current or proposed service. Including the overall purpose and aim of the service and how the service will address health inequalities. Who are the service users? What impact will the service have on the users?



Part 2

Equality Impact Assessment Review

1. Equality Impact Assessment

How could the new proposed or existing service impact the protected groups as identified under the Equality Act 2010?

Do you foresee any equality impact of this service, and have you identified any specific actions to address these?

Each protected characteristic should be considered in turn, throughout you should consider the following:

- *Does the service relate to a policy or activity where there is significant potential for reducing health inequalities or improving outcomes for under-represented groups?*
- *Does the service affect one or more of the protected characteristics or other vulnerable groups?*
- *Identify whether certain groups are excluded or negatively impacted from the service?*
- *What is the likely size of the group affected and how significant is the effect on them?*
- *Identify whether there is any direct or indirect discrimination*
- *Assess if there is any negative impact on particular groups*
- *Address identified equality issues in the service*
- *Where possible remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics*
- *Are you taking the steps to meet the needs of people from protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people?*

Consider using evidence to support your assessment; evidence includes views and issues raised during engagement; service user journeys and experiences, case studies, and qualitative research, as well as quantitative data and statistics.

Ensure positive impacts as well as negative are highlighted. Include any opportunities to advance equality and/or good relations, and for good practice to be further developed.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	IMPACT	REASON FOR YOUR DECISION (INCLUDING EVIDENCE USED). <i>Include details of how it might impact on people from this group in eliminating direct or indirect discrimination and how opportunities to advance equality and promoting good relations have been maximised.</i>
<p>Age</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Disability</p> <p>Disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010:</p> <p>Those with any physical, sensory, learning, cognitive or mental health impairment or health condition which causes individuals to face barriers to employment, equal opportunities, access to goods, facilities or services lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, or terminal.</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Sex</p> <p>A person's sex, including intersex people</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Gender Reassignment</p> <p>Internal sense of their own gender and gender expression, whether male, female or something else (for example non-binary people), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth; and aspects of how an individual expresses gender, including clothing, mannerisms and other aspects of expression.</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	IMPACT	REASON FOR YOUR DECISION (INCLUDING EVIDENCE USED). <i>Include details of how it might impact on people from this group in eliminating direct or indirect discrimination and how opportunities to advance equality and promoting good relations have been maximised.</i>
Marriage or civil Partnership	POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy and maternity	POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/>	
Race Race, nationality, colour, culture or ethnic origin including non-English speakers, gypsies/travellers, migrant workers.	POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or Belief Religion includes any religion as well as lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief.	POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/>	

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	IMPACT	REASON FOR YOUR DECISION (INCLUDING EVIDENCE USED). <i>Include details of how it might impact on people from this group in eliminating direct or indirect discrimination and how opportunities to advance equality and promoting good relations have been maximised.</i>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p> <p>A person's orientation towards people of the same sex, the opposite sex or more than one gender.</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Carers</p> <p>A carer is anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of health condition, physical, sensory, cognitive, learning, or mental health impairment and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>WELSH LANGUAGE</p> <p>In Wales, the Welsh and English languages will be treated on a basis of equality</p>		<p>So;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new policy must include a comprehensive impact assessment on the Welsh language. • Wherever possible, any new policy ought to have at worst a neutral effect on the Welsh language. • Opportunities to create more favourable conditions for the Welsh language to flourish ought to be sought
<p>Welsh Language</p> <p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh Language.</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favorably than the English language.</p>	<p>POSITIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEGATIVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEUTRAL <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Is there any impact on other groups not covered by the protected characteristics?

If yes use the column below to describe what the potential impact is, what you could do to remove/reduce any negative impact and what you could do to benefit from any positive impact.

It is important not to limit your thinking just to the protected characteristics listed above. This question is broadening the EqIA out to be more inclusive. The impact might be a negative one (e.g. making that decision could worsen accessing a service for low paid and wealthier people) or it could be a positive one (e.g. by making that decision, low paid people are able to access better healthcare). In Scotland, there is a specific remote and rural protected characteristic that should be considered within all EqIAs. This also includes: single parents, overseas status, refugee status and economic exclusion.

Comment

Part 3

Action Planning and Ongoing Monitoring

The assessment should properly evidence and recommend one of the three implementation options.

- No barriers or impact identified – proceed with no change
- Adapt or change the service in a way which will eliminate or reduce impact to affected groups
- Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the service. Therefore, you are going to proceed knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.

The EqIA must specify a system of monitoring which is reviewed on an annual basis.

ACTION PLANNING AND ONGOING MONITORING

Actions to be taken to address negative impacts and maximise positive impacts	
Potential Outcomes	
Lead (Details of who is responsible)	
Timescales	
Monitoring arrangements	
Signed	
Date	

Thank you for completing this Equality Impact Assessment Reporting Template

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